

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
LINCOLN AMTRAK STATION

## ABOARD "THE HONEST ABE"

1:29 P.M. CDT

Hi, everybody. It is great to be in Pontiac. I have just been corrected -- Bloomington and Lincoln. (Laughter)

Let me say on behalf of Betty that we have had a delightful day, starting with Joliet, and it is great to be here. It is just wonderful to see such a tremendous crowd. Ed Madigan, your outstanding Congressman, tells me there are more people here than in the community itself. Thank you very much.

Before saying a word or two, Betty and I reiterate our appreciation. Let me introduce some people who have joined us in this trip through the heartland of Illinois. First, I would like to introduce to you the next Governor of the State of Illinois, Jim Thompson. Let me add how grateful I am that Chuck Percy, your outstanding United States Senator, has been with us all day long. Thank you, Chuck.

It would be the best thing for the State of Illinois to have George Lindberg, your State Comptroller, for the next two years -- four years. Then it is so wonderful to have the opportunity of saying that my association with Ed Madigan, when I was in the House and his support for me while I have been President of the United States, I appreciate it. He is good for us, he is good for Illinois and he is great for the United States.

Let me take just a minute to let you in on some inside information. This morning I got a telegram from Governor Carter, who is attempting to clarify his position on a number of important issues. Specifically, there seems to be some confusion over exactly where Jimmy Carter does stand on a number of issues.

I sent him a telegram indicating that I am delighted to help him clarify his position on such important issues as income taxes, the deductibility of mortgage interest payments, Federal spending programs and the defense budget. The Governor denies that he is for increasing taxes on middle income families. I pointed out to him that in an interview with the Associated Press he specifically stated that he wanted to increase income taxes on those families whose income level is above the medium, which is approximately \$14,000 per year.

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(OVER)

I am against increasing anybody's taxes. I think we should cut taxes for the American people. The Governor denied that he had advocated eliminating the deduction for home owners' interest payments. I pointed out to the Governor in my telegram that last February -- last February 1976 -- in a debate sponsored by the League of Women Voters, he stated that he would advocate eliminating the tax deduction for interest paid on home mortgages. President Ford is against the elimination of that deduction for home owners on their mortgage payments.

Governor Carter denied that his new spending program would cost \$100 billion annually. I pointed out to him in my telegram that the spending programs proposed in the Democratic platform that Governor Carter helped to write would probably cost close to \$200 billion annually.

Specifically, such proposals as the Humphrey-Hawkins bill, the national health insurance proposal, the Perkins educational bill, a negative income tax, would cost approximately \$100 billion annually.

I firmly believe that we should keep a lid on Federal spending. The only way to hold down the cost of living is to hold down the cost of Government. I would much rather give tax cuts to the American people than to think up new ways to have the Federal Government spend your hard earned tax dollars.

Governor Carter, in the telegram to me, stated that he had not called for a \$15 billion reduction in the defense budget. I pointed out in my telegram to him that in March of 1975, in Savannah, Georgia and again in a press conference in Los Angeles, California, he called for a \$15 billion reduction in the defense budget.

I firmly believe that it is in our national interest. I strongly believe that in order to keep peace throughout the world, the United States must remain number one, and you can't stay number one with a \$15 billion reduction in the defense budget.

We cannot preserve our independence and provide help and assistance for freedom around the world, defend our own national interest, unless we are willing to have the finest military capability that the American people can buy, and under President Ford we are number one and under President Ford for the next four years we are going to stay number one.

I also suggested to Governor Carter that he might want to clarify his position on a number of other issues that are of interest to the American people. First, he really believes, as he said in an interview with Liberty Magazine, that church property should be taxed. Number two, does he agree with his own economic adviser that his economic programs would lead to additional inflation? Does he really believe that our nation is not strong enough? Does he really believe, as he stated in San Francisco, that America is no longer respected? I closed in my telegram to Governor Carter by saying that I eagerly await his response to these questions and I look forward to our next debate in Williamsburg.

Betty and I have loved the opportunity to be in Illinois. We are here because we want your help. We are here because we want to carry Illinois. We believe with the warm and friendly receptions that we have gotten in Illinois that we are going to carry Illinois, and we are going to win on November 2.

For the last two years since I have had the honor of being President of the United States, we have restored trust--we have restored trust in the White House--we have turned the economy around, and we are on the way to real prosperity in America. We have peace, and I am proud to say that not a single young American is fighting and dying on foreign soil today. That is a record of performance, and I ask you to match that against the promises of Jimmy Carter.

Jimmy Carter--when he goes to California, he tries to sound like Cesar Chavez. When Jimmy Carter goes to Chicago, he tries to sound like Mayor Daley. (Laughter) When Jimmy Carter goes to New York, he tries to sound like Bella Abzug. (Laughter) When he comes to Illinois, he tries to sound just like a little, old peanut farmer. (Laughter) Jimmy Carter wavers and wanders, he wiggles and waffles. (Laughter)

Let me say the issues that we face today are taxes. The best tax reform I know is tax reduction. As I said in that telegram, Jimmy Carter wants to increase taxes for all above the medium income, which means that 50 percent of the taxpayers of this country will have a tax increase.

The issue of spending is a very pertinent one because that is your hard-earned tax dollar. Jimmy Carter wants to increase spending. President Ford wants to keep a lid on Federal spending.

Jimmy Carter says he wants to reorganize the Federal Government. Well, let's look at how he did it in Georgia. In Georgia, after four years, he increased the number of State employees by 25 percent or more. He increased the spending of the State of Georgia by 50 percent or more. He increased the indebtedness of the State of Georgia by over \$200 million. With that kind of a record, do you want to trust him to reorganize your Federal Government?

If you like Jimmy Carter, you like more taxes. I don't think the American people want more taxes. They want reduced taxes, as they will get, as they have gotten, under President Ford.

Let me just conclude by saying that Betty and I love being here. We love our country, as all of you do.

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When Jimmy Carter says that the United States, our country, is not respected any more, that is not true, because leaders of the free world, the people of the free world do respect the United States. And when Jimmy Carter says our country is not respected, he is slandering America. I don't like it and you don't like it, and he is not going to be President for the next four years.

I am going to come down and have the privilege and honor of shaking hands with as many of you as I possibly can. But while we are doing that, while I am trying to do that, we have some very honored and very prominent and special guests on board this train who have come from faraway places in our country to show their support for me. I am going to ask your outstanding United States Senator Chuck Percy to introduce them to you and then they will come and join me in extending the warm hand of friendship to all of you.

Thank you.

END (AT 1:44 P.M. CDT)